

WHEREAS, Misinformation regarding arthritis and the lack of public education have contributed to apathy and neglect of the rheumatic diseases; and

WHEREAS, Arthritis sufferers are ~~the-most-exploited-of all-victims-of-disease~~ often exploited, spending an estimated \$950,000,000 a year nationally on worthless remedies, treatments, and devices; and

WHEREAS, The problem of arthritis is complicated by the fact that if the State's 583,000 citizens with arthritis were to seek early diagnosis, effective treatment and appropriate support services, ~~they-would-have-difficulty entering-the-health-care-system-at-the-most-appropriate-time and-place-to-receive-specialized-services~~ the health care system at this time would be unable to provide such services; and

WHEREAS, Present estimates indicate that 70 percent of the primary care physicians in practice have had little ~~exposure-to~~ training in rheumatic disease care and management, and few schools training health professionals devote specific curricula to the care of individuals with arthritis; and

WHEREAS, The complications of arthritis may lead to loss of employment, expensive medical care, a need for economic assistance, and social problems by role changes within families; and

~~WHEREAS, -More-important-for-the-individual-patient,-the expenses-are-inevitable,-and~~

WHEREAS, There is no way to estimate the price of a lifetime of frustration, the intolerable pain, the crippling, the inability to hold or find a job, or the impossibilities of maintaining a satisfying family life; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the Governor is requested to appoint a task force on arthritis in order to identify the health, social, educational, and economic needs of the State's citizens suffering from arthritis and related diseases, to assess the economic impact resulting from arthritis with regard to the public and private sectors of the State, and to ascertain the most cost effective means to meet the existing needs; and be it further

RESOLVED, The task force shall be charged with determining how the various State agencies of government might work together and with the private sector to utilize existing resources and capabilities to meet those needs; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the task force be composed of the following members: one member of the Senate of Maryland,